

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5197

INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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SUBJECT: INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS SUBJECT OF HEATED
POLITICAL DEBATE

REF: MUNICH 002692

SUMMARY: THE CONTROVERSY RESULTING FROM THE DISCLOSURE
IN THE DEC. 15 ISSUE OF "DER SPIEGEL" THAT IN SOME CASES
THE GDR HAS PUT UP THE CHILDREN OF PARENTS WHO WERE
CAUGHT TRYING TO FLEE THE GDR FOR FORCED ADOPTION
("ZWANGSADOPTION") HAS PLUNGED INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS
ONCE AGAIN INTO THE FOREFRONT OF DOMESTIC DEBATE. THE
"SPIEGEL" ARTICLE CAME AT A PARTICULARLY UNPROFITIOUS
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TIME FOR THE SCHMIDT GOVERNMENT WHICH IS ABOUT TO CON-

CLUDE NEW AND COSTLY ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRANSIT ROUTE IMPROVEMENTS WITH THE GDR. THE CONTROVERSY WAS FURTHER ESCALATED BY THE DECISION BY BAVARIAN MINISTER PRESIDENT TO CANCEL A COURTESY CALL BY THE GDR PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE KOHL AND THE EXPULSION OF THE "SPIEGEL'S" CORRESPONDENT IN EAST BERLIN. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS INSTRUCTED FRG PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE GAUS TO PROTEST BOTH THE FORCED ADOPTION POLICY AND THE EXPULSION OF THE "SPIEGEL" CORRESPONDENT. OPPOSITION POLITICIANS HAD ALREADY CALLED FOR A BREAKING OFF OF THE TRANSIT NEGOTIATIONS AND IT IS CERTAIN THAT THE CDU/CSU WILL MAKE A POLITICAL ISSUE OUT OF THE SIGNING OF THE NEW TRANSIT ARRANGEMENTS IN THE WAKE OF THE EAST GERMAN ACTIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE DEC. 15 ISSUE OF "DER SPIEGEL" DISCLOSED THAT THE GDR HAS A SECRET POLICY OF PUTTING UP FOR ADOPTION (BY "POLITICALLY RELIABLE FAMILIES") CHILDREN OF PARENTS WHO HAD BEEN IMPRISONED FOR ATTEMPTING TO FLEE EAST GERMANY. LATER THE PARENTS WERE "DEPORTED" TO WEST GERMANY BUT THE CHILDREN REMAINED IN THE GDR. "SPIEGEL" SAID THAT THERE WERE AT LEAST TWO KNOWN CASES OF FORCED ADOPTION ("ZWANGSADOPTION"). FOLLOWING THE DISCLOSURE, A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN DEPLORED THE EAST GERMAN POLICY. LATER FRG SPOKESMAN BOELLING SAID THAT THE EAST GERMANS HAD DENIED THAT "ZWANGSADOPTION" WAS A COMMON PRACTICE. IT REMAINS UNCLEAR HOW WIDE-SPREAD THE PRACTICE IS IN THE GDR.

2. IN THE WAKE OF THE "SPIEGEL" DISCLOSURE, CSU MINISTER PRESIDENT GOPPEL CANCELLED A COURTESY VISIT BY THE GDR PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE IN BONN, MICHAEL KOHL (REFTEL). REPORTEDLY, KOHL DENOUNCED THE "SPIEGEL" ARTICLE AS "DIRTY SLANDER" BUT WAS UNABLE TO CONVINCE THE BAVARIANS TO PERMIT HIM TO CARRY OUT HIS OFFICIAL COURTESY CALLS ON THE BAVARIAN GOVERNMENT.

3. ON DEC. 16, GDR OFFICIALS CALLED IH THE "SPIEGEL" CORRESPONDENT IN EAST BERLIN, JOERG METTKE, AND INFORMED HIM THAT HE HAD 48 HOURS TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY BECAUSE HE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HAD "SLANDERED" THE GDR. LATER, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED THAT FRG PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE GDR GAUS HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO PROTEST BOTH THE "ZWANGS-ADOPTION" POLICY AND METTKE'S EXPULSION.

4. THE CONTROVERSY RESULTING FROM DISCLOSURE OF THE GDR'S FORCED ADOPTION POLICY HAS COME AT AN INOPPORTUNE TIME FOR THE SCHMIDT GOVERNMENT. THE CALL BY OPPOSITION

POLITICIANS FOR BREAKING OFF NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE GDR
ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN THE TRANSIT ROUTES TO
BERLIN CAME ON THE EVE OF THE CONCLUSION OF THE
TALKS. NEVERTHELESS, THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO CONCLUDE
THE ARRANGEMENTS DEC. 19. WHILE IT COULD HAVE BEEN
EXPECTED THAT THE CDU AND CSU WOULD, IN ANY EVENT, BE
CRITICAL OF THE IMPROVEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AS BEING TOO
FAVORABLE TO THE EAST GERMANS, THE TIMING OF THE
"ZWANGSADOPTION" CONTROVERSY WILL PROVIDE THE OPPOSITION
WITH ADDITIONAL POLITICAL AMMUNITION. THE CDU HAS
ALREADY ADDRESSED PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS TO THE GOVERN-
MENT ABOUT THE "ZWANGSADOPTION" AFFAIR WHICH THE GOVERN-
MENT WILL HAVE TO ANSWER WHEN THE BUNDESTAG RECONVENES
ON JANUARY 12.
HILLENBRAND

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